

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 EUR-12 ARA-10 NSCE-00 ICAE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-12 INRE-00 SSO-00 /096 W

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O 311418Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1947

S E C R E T LILONGWE 0829

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS/ XA, CU, UR, MPOL

SUBJ: SOVIET AND CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA

REF: STATE 134913

1. ON BASIS OF RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH SENIOR GOM OFFICIALS, WE CONCLUDE THAT MALAWI (A) IS DISTRESSED BY INCREASING SOVIET AND CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA AND (B) THAT THE MOMENT MAY BE PAST WHEN THE US AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES COULD STEM THE TIDE. MALAWI IS UNDOUBTEDLY CONCERNED, OF COURSE, BY RHODESIA'S UNCERTAIN FUTURE. THE SOVIET ROLE THERE HAS ALWAYS BOTHERED THEM AND KAUNDA'S RECENT STATEMENTS REGARDING CUBAN INVOLVEMENT HAS ADDED TO THEIR DISTRESS. GOM OFFICIALS ALL TOO READILY IN THE PAST HAVE SEEMED TO ASK WHY THE US COULD NOT SUSTAIN ITS ORIGINAL PLANS IN ANGOLA AND LATER THE OGADEN, EVEN WHILE THESE SAME OFFICIALS UNDERSTAND AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE CONSTRAINTS UNDER WHICH THE USG WAS OPERATING DURING THOSE PERIODS.

2. GOM OFFICIALS APPEAR TO BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIETS, IF SUCCESSFUL IN RHODESIA, WILL SEARCH FOR OTHER EASY TARGETS IN THIS AREA AND MALAWI PROBABLY STANDS OUT SINCE SOUTH AFRICA WOULD BE MORE FORMIDABLE.

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MALAWI DOES NOT HAVE EASY RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS AND THEREFORE CANNOT BE ASSURED THAT ITS AFRICAN BRETHEN WILL PROTECT THEM.

3. AS FOR THE SOVIET-CUBAN ROLE BEING DIVISIVE AMONG AFRICANS, THERE HAD BEEN SIGNIFICANT IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES EVEN BEFORE ANGOLA. THE SOVIET-CUBAN INVOLVEMENT DURING PAST YEAR OR SO HAS ONLY MADE THE

DIVISION marginally wider, although increasing Soviet-Cuban self-assurance can hardly be lost on Africans and make them ever more fearful of future problems.  
SHEINBAUM

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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